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CATAWBA COUNTY BUDGET OFFICE WINS 23RD STRAIGHT NATIONAL AWARD

For the twenty-third straight year, Catawba County's Budget Office has been recognized by its peers for producing a budget document which is easy to read and understand. The County Budget Office has won the 2011 Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). This award recognized the County's fiscal year 2011-2012 budget.

"I am pleased to notify you that the County of Catawba has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award," GFOA Executive Director Jeffrey L. Esser said in a letter to the County. "This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and represents a significant achievement by your organization."

The award is presented to governmental units which, according to the GFOA, "reflect the commitment of the governing body and staff to meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting." In order to receive the award, Catawba County's Budget Office had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation. These guidelines are designed to assess how well a government's budget serves as:

- a policy document
- a financial plan
- an operations guide
- a communications device

Budget documents must be rated "proficient" in all four of these categories to receive the award.

"Catawba County was one of the first in the State of North Carolina to apply for and receive this award twenty-three years ago," said Jennifer Mace, the County's Budget Manager. "Although receiving this award is not new for us, it's not something we take for granted. Each year, the GFOA's award review committee makes recommendations for improvements to our document so we must weigh these recommendations against our goal of providing useful information for the general public that is easily



(Left to right) Paul Murray, Budget Analyst II; Katrina Crooks, Budget Analyst I; Jennifer Mace, Budget Manager, Kitty Barnes, Chair, Catawba County Board of Commissioners.



understood. It's an ongoing process of constant change and improvement.”

Catawba County's annual budget is created through a year-long planning process involving department heads, the Budget Staff, County Manager Tom Lundy and the Board of Commissioners. Staff members recognized for this budget included Mace, Katrina Crooks, Budget Analyst I, Paul Murray, Budget Analyst II, and Kelly Davis, Management Analyst (who is now working for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department).

The Government Finance Officers Association is a non-profit professional association serving more than 17,400 government finance professionals throughout North America. Catawba County was one of only 1,250 recipients of the award this year and among a small minority of counties to receive the award for twenty-three consecutive years.

